



2024-25 Optimist Club Essay Contest

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Optimist Club Essay Contest?

Every year, Optimist International, a volunteer organization focused on bringing out the best in youth, communities, and one another, sponsors an essay contest to provide an opportunity for students to express their perspectives on a given topic. Local Optimist Clubs host an essay contest to further this initiative.

Why should I submit an essay?

This contest gives you a chance to not only express yourself but win a cash prize and potential scholarship! At the club level, winners will receive **up to \$125**. The overall winner of the contest will move onto the district level for a chance to win a **\$2,500 scholarship**.

What is the topic for this year's topic?

The 2024-25 topic is "How Optimism Has Paved My Road to Success."

Who can participate in the essay contest?

Any student under 19 years of age by October 1st, 2024 that has not completed secondary school can participate. There are no grade-level restrictions or minimum age requirements; however, this contest may be more accessible for students in 4th-12th grade.

This essay contest is for students attending a school in Calvert County, except for schools in Lusby, Maryland. Students in Lusby should reach out to the Solomons Optimist Club for more information.

What should I write about?

What you write about is entirely up to you! So long as your essay aligns with the contest topic, you can write about anything. Many students write from their personal experiences and/or reflect on the essay topic based on conversations with community members, connections to relevant historical or current events, research, and more. It's about what this year's topic means to you – how you express that meaning will vary.



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Where can I find the essay contest application form?

The contest application form can be found at www.CalvertOptimists.org.

What are the contest rules?

Contest rules are provided on the application form under *Section III – Contest Rules*. Be sure to read the contest rules carefully. Failure to abide by the contest rules may result in disqualification. Note that if submitting via email, certain rules do not apply (e.g., stapling requirements).

How do I enter? What is the deadline for submissions?

Submissions are due electronically or physically by 11:59PM ET on Friday, February 7th, 2025. Electronic submissions should be sent to kimmel763@gmail.com. Please contact the Optimist Club Essay Coordinator **at least one week** prior to the deadline to arrange a physical submission.

If submitting electronically, include the application and essay as attachments. The application can be provided as a photocopy; however, it must be clear and legible.

I still have questions. Who can I reach out to for more information?

Contact the Optimist Club Essay Contest Coordinator, Kimberly Imel, via email at kimmel763@gmail.com or 301-385-2317.
